



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, SE, Suite 754, East Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334  
(404) 656-5957

**Nathan Deal**  
Governor

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
Interim Commissioner

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Media Contact: Reg Griffin

404-656-0239 (office)

404-309-8131 (cell)

[reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov)



## **Children's Pre-Literacy and School Readiness Skills Increase during Georgia's Innovative Summer Transition Program**

*Programs target Rising Kindergarten and Rising Pre-K students needing Additional Support*

**ATLANTA, Ga., (August 26, 2014)** – According to research, the results of Georgia's Summer Transition Programs for rising Pre-K and rising Kindergarten students are impressive. A report by national experts in early childhood education and care concludes that children preparing to enter kindergarten who participated in the six-week transition program showed significant improvement in pre-literacy and school readiness skills. Both programs targeted children in low-income families eligible for subsidized child care, and the rising Pre-K program focused on children from families where Spanish is the primary language. The report shares the results of a multi-year evaluation commissioned by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL).

The study, conducted by scientists at the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (FPG) and Child Trends, evaluated the skills of 126 rising kindergarten students at the start and end of the summer program. To evaluate the rising pre-kindergarten program, scientists observed teachers and students in 19 classrooms where English and Spanish were used. In both transition programs, teachers and transition coaches completed questionnaires.

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“We have consistently seen gains in children’s skills over the past five years of the Rising Kindergarten Program,” said Susan Adams, Assistant Commissioner for Georgia’s Pre-K Program and Instructional Supports. “For a six-week program to demonstrate even moderate gains is somewhat unexpected and implies a successful implementation.”

Adams said past research shows that learning opportunities for dual-language learners are maximized when both languages are used in the classroom. In this study, English and Spanish were used for explicit instruction and behavior management in the Rising Pre-K Program. The majority of classrooms had books in English and Spanish.

“Georgia’s Summer Transition Programs provide important opportunities for young learners to build their skills and confidence before moving into Pre-K and Kindergarten,” said Amy Jacobs, DECAL Interim Commissioner. “We appreciate the partnerships with our early care and education providers and teachers who made these valuable classes available over the summer months.”

To view highlights from the study and/or the full report, visit the DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/SummerTransitionProgram.aspx>.

### **About Bright from the Start**

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov).